A True Tale of *Robbin*

OR

a briefe touch of the life and death o
enowned Outlaw, *Robert* Earle of *Huntin*
lgarly called *Robbin Hood*, who lived and died in
198. being the 9. yeare of the reigne of King *Ri*
the first, commonly called *Richard Cuer de Lyon.*

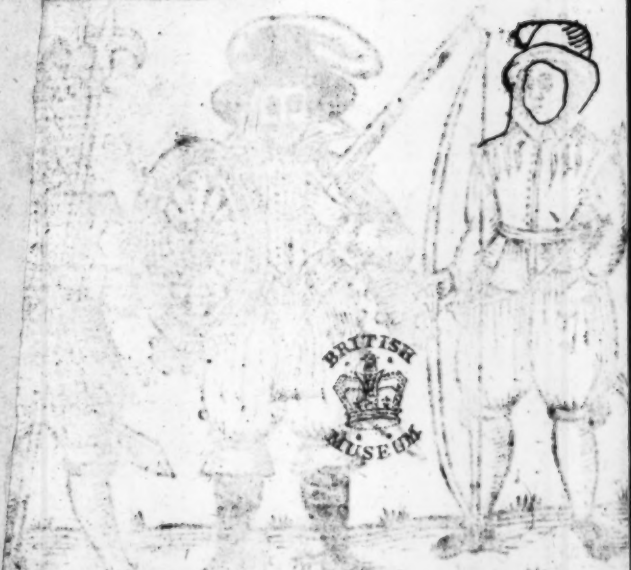
refully collected out of the truest Writers of our English C
s. And published for the satisfaction of those who desire to
Truth purged from falsehood.

By *Martin Parker.*

nted at *London* for *T. Cotes*, and are to be sold b *F. Grove*, d
upon Snow hill, ouer the

This must contain
this volume cost
me ten pounds

639. a. 52.


BRITISH MUSEUM

A True Tale, of
Robin Hood.

BOth Gentlemen or Yeomen bould
or whatsoever you are:
To have a stately story tould,
attention now prepare.
It is a Tale of Robbin Hood,
that I to you will tell:
Which being rightly understood,
I know will please you well.
This Robbin (so much talked on)
was once a man of fame,
Instiled Earle of Huntington
Lord Robert Hood by Name.
In Courtship and Magnificence,
his carriage won him prayse,

o greater favour with his Prince
than any in his dayes.
bountyous Liberality
he so much did excell,
nd loved men of quality,
more than exceeding well.
is great Revennues all he sould
for wine and costly cheere:
e kept three hundred Bowmen bold,
he shooting lov'd so deare.
o Archer living in his time,
with him might well compare,
e practis'd all his youthfull prime,
that exercise most rare.
t last by his profuse expence,
he had consum'd his wealth;
nd being outlawed by his Prince,
in woods he liv'd by stealth.
he Abbot of S. Maries Rich,
to whom he money ought,
is hatred to this Earle was such,
that he his pownefall wrought.
o being outlawed (as 'tis told)
he with a Crew went forth,
f lusty Cutters stout and bold,
and robbed in the North.
mong the rest, one little John,
a yeoman bold and free;

Who

Who could (if it stood him upon)
with ease encounter three.
One hundred men in all he got,
with whom (the Story sayes)
Three hundred common men durst not
hold combate any wayes.
They Yorkshire woods frequented much,
and Lancashire also:
Wherein their practises were such,
that they wrought mickle woe.
None rich durst travell to and fro,
(though ne're so strongly arm'd.)
But by these theeves (so strong in show)
they still were rob'd and harm'd.
His chiefest spight to the Clergie was,
that lived in monstrous pride:
No one of them he would let passe,
along the high way side:
But first they must to dinner goe,
and afterwards to Shrift:
Full many a one he served so,
thus while he liv'd by theft.
No Monkes nor Fryers he would let goe,
without paying their Fées:
If they thought much to be us'd so,
their stones he made them leese:
For such as they the Countrey fill'd,
with Bastards in those dayes.

Which to prevent, these Sparkes did geld,
all that came by their wayes.
But Robbin Hood so gentle was
and bore so brave a minde:
If any in distresse did passe,
to them he was so kinde,
That he would give and lend to them,
to helpe them at their nede:
This made all poore men pray for him,
and wilht he well might spede.
The Widdow and the Fatherlesse
he would send meanes unto:
And those whom famine did oppresse
found him a friendly foe.
Nor would he doe a woman wrong,
but for her sake conveid:
He would protect with power strong
all those who crav'd his ayde.
The Abbot of Saint Maries then,
who him undid before:
Was riding with two hundred men,
and Gold and Silver store:
But Robbin Hood upon him set
with his Couragious Sparkes:
And all the coyne, perforce did get,
which was twelve thousand Markes.
He bound the Abbot to a Tree,
and would not let him passe.

Before

Before that (to his men and he)
his Lordship had sayd Walle.
Which being done upon his horse
he set him fast a stride:
And with his face towards his ar—
he forced him to ride.
His men were faine to be his guide,
for he rode backward home:
The Abbot being thus vilified
did sorely chafe and fume.
Thus Robbin Hood did vindicate
his former wrongs receiv'd:
For 'twas this coveteous Prelate,
that him of Land bereav'd.
The Abbot he rode to the King,
with all the haste he could,
And to his Grace he every thing,
exactly did unfold.
And sayd if that no course were tane,
(by force or Stratagem)
To take this Rebell and his traine,
no man should passe for them.
The King protested by and by,
unto the Abbot then,
That Robbin Hood with speed should dye,
with all his merry men.
But ere the King did any send,
he did another feate:

Which

Which did his Grace much more offend,
the fact (indeed) was great.
For in a short time after that,
the Kings Receivers went.
Towards London with the Coyne they got,
for's Highnesse Northerne Rent.
Bold Robbin Hood and little John,
with the rest of their Traine:
(Not dreading Law) set them upon,
and did their gold obtaine.
The King much moved at the same,
(and the Abbots talke also,)
In this his anger did proclaime,
(and sent word to and fro:)
That whoso'ere alive or dead,
could bring him Robbin Hood,
Should have one thousand Markes well payd,
in gold and silver good.
This promise of the King did make,
full many yeomen bold,
Attempt stout Robbin Hood to take,
with all the force they could:
But still when any came to him,
within the gay greene wood:
He entertainement gave to them,
with Venison fat and good.
And shewd to them such martiall sport,
with his long bow and Arrow,

That

That they of him did give report,
how that it was great sorrow,
That such a worthy man as he,
should thus be put to shift,
Being late a Lord of high degrée,
of living quite bereft.
The King to take him, more and more,
sent men of mickle might:
But he and his still beate them sore,
and conquered them in fight:
Or else with love and courtesie,
to him he won their hearts.
Thus still he lived by robbery,
throughout the Northerne parts,
And all the Country stood in dread,
of Robbin Hood and's men:
For stouter Lads ne're liv'd by bread,
in those dayes nor since then.
The Abbot (which before I nam'd,)
sought all the meanes he could,
To have by force this Rebell tane,
and his adherents bold.
Therefore he arm'd five hundred men,
with furniture compleate:
But the outlawes slew halfe of them,
and made the rest retreate.
The long bow and the arrow keene,
they were so us'd unto;

That

That still they kept the Forest gréene,
in spight o'th' proudest foe.
Twelve of the Abbots men he tooke,
who came him to have tane:
When all the rest the field forsooke,
these he did entertaine;
With Banquetting and Merriment,
and having us'd them well,
He to their Lord them safely sent,
and will'd them him to tell:
That if he would be pleas'd at last
to beg of our good King;
That he might pardon what was past,
and him to favour bring:
He would surrender backe agen
the money which before
Was taken by him and his men,
from him and many more.
Poore men might safely passe by him,
and some that way would chuse,
For well they knew that to helpe them,
he evermore did use.
But where he knew a Wiser Rich
that did the poore oppresse;
To séele his Coyne his hand did itch
hée de have it more or lesse.
And sometimes when the high-way fayld,
then he his courage rouses;

He and his men have oft assayld
such rich men in their houses:
So that through dread of Robbin then,
and his adventurous Crew:
The Wizers kept great store of men,
which else maintayn'd but few.
King Richard of that name the first,
Sirnamed Cuer de Lyon,
Went to defeate the Pagans Curst,
who kept the coasts of Syon,
The Bishop of Ely Chancelor
was left as vice Roy here,
Who like a potent Emperor,
did proudly domminere.
Our Chronicles of him report
that commonly he rode:
With a thousand Horse from court to court,
where he would make abode.
He riding downe towards the North,
with his aforesayd traine:
Robbin and his did issue forth
them all to entertaine.
And with the Gallant Gray Goose wing,
they shewed to them such play,
That made their horses kickle and fling,
and downe their Riders Lay.
Full glad and faine the Bishop was
for all his thousand men,

To

To ſéeke what meanes he could to paſſe,
from out of Robbins ken.
Two hundred of his men were kil'd,
and fourteſcore horſes good;
Thirty who did as captives yéeld,
were carryed to the gréene wood:
Which afterwards were ranſomed,
for twenty Markes a man:
The reſt ſet ſpurres to horſe and fled,
to'th towne of Warrington.
The Biſhop ſore enraged then,
did in King Richards name:
Muſter a power of Northerne men,
theſe outlawes bold to tame.
But Robbin with his courteſie,
ſo wonne the meaner ſort,
That they were loath on him to try,
what rigor did import.
So that bold Robbin and his traine,
did live unhurt of them:
Untill King Richard came againe,
from faire Jeruſalem.
And then the talke of of Robbin Hood,
his royall cares did fill:
His grace admir'd that ith gréene wood,
he thus continued ſtill.
So that the country farre and neare,
did give him great applauſe:

For none of them nede stand in feare,
but such as broke the lawes.
He wished well unto the King,
and prayed still for his healthy:
And never practised any thing,
against the Common wealth.
Onely because he was undone,
by'th' Crewell Clergie then:
All meanes that he could thinke upon,
to vexe such kinde of men,
He enterprized with hatefull spléne,
in which he was to blame:
For fault of some to wréke his téne
on all that by him came.
With wealth which he by Robbery got
eight almes houses he built:
Thinking thereby to purge the blot,
of blood which he had spilt:
Such was their blinde devotion then,
depending on their workes:
Which if 'twere true, we Christian men,
inferiour were to Turkes.
But to speake true of Robbin Hood,
and wrong him not a jot:
He never would shed any mans blood,
that him invaded not.
Nor would he injure husbandmen,
that toyl'd at Cart and Plough.

For

For well he knew, were't not for them,
to live no man knew how.
The King in person with some Lords,
to Nottingham did Ride,
To try what Strength and skill affords,
to Crush these out lawes pride.
And as he once before had done,
he did againe proclaime
That whosoere would take upon
to bring to Nottingham,
Or any place within the Land
Rebellious Robbin Hood,
Should be preferd in place to stand,
with those of Noble blood.
When Robbin Hood heard of the same,
within a little space,
Into the Towne of Nottingham,
a letter to his Grace,
He shot upon an Arrow head,
one evening cunningly;
Which was brought to the King and read
before his Majestie:
The Tennour of this Letter was
that Robbin would submit,
And be true Leigeman to his Grace,
in any thing that's fit;
So that his Highnesse would forgive,
him and his merry men all:

If not he must i'th Greene wood live,
and take what chance did fall,
The King would faine have pardoned him,
but that some Lords did say:
This president will much condemne
your Grace another Day.
While that the King and Lords did stay
debating on this thing:
Some of these outlawes fled away
unto the Scottish King:
For they suppos'd if he were tane
or to the King did yeld:
By th' commons all the rest on's traine
full quickely would be Quell'd,
Of more than full a hundred men,
but forty tarryed still:
Who were resolv'd to sticke to him
let fortune worke her will.
If none had fled, all for his sake
had got their pardon free:
The King to favour meant to take
his merry men and he.
But ere the pardon to him came.
this famous Archer dy'd:
His death and manner of the same,
Ile presently describe.
For being vext to thinke upon
his followers Revolt:

In melancholly passion
he did recount his fault.
Perfidious traytors, sayd he then,
in all your dangers past,
Have I you guarded as my men,
to leave me thus at last?
This sad perplexity did cause,
a Feber (as some say)
Which him unto consution drawes,
though by a straunger way.
This deadly danger to prevent,
he hide him (with all spœde)
Unto a Nunnery with intent,
for his healths sake to blœde.
A faithlesse Fryer did pretend,
in love to let him blood:
But he by falshood wrought the end,
of famous Robbin Hood.
The Fryer (as some say) did this,
to vindicate the wrong:
Which to the Clergie he and his,
had done by power strong.
Thus dyed he by trechery,
who could not dye by losse:
Had he liv'd longer certainely
King Richard in remorse,
Had unto favour him receav'd,
he brave men elevated.

'Tis pitty he was of life bereav'd,
by one which he so hated.
A treacherous Leech this Fryer was,
to let him bleed to death:
And Robbin was me thinkes an-asse,
to trust him with his breath.
His Corpes the Priores of the place,
(the next day that he dy'd)
Caused to be buried (in meane case)
close by the high way side.
And over him she caused a stone,
to be fixed on the ground:
An Epitaph was set thereon,
wherein his name was found,
The date o'th yeare and day also,
shee made to be set there:
That all who by the way did goe.
might see it plaine appeare,
That such a man as Robbin Hood,
was buried in that place:
And how he lived in the greene wood,
and Rob'd there for a space.
It seemes that though the Clergie he,
had put to mickle woe:
He should not quite forgotten be,
although he was their foe.
This woman though she did him hate,
yet loved his memory:

And thought it wondrous pitty that,
his fame should with him dye.
This Epitaph, as Records tell,
within this hundred yeares,
By many was discerned well,
but time all things outweares.
His followers when he was dead,
were some received to grace:
The rest to forraigne Countries fled,
and left their native place.
Although his funerall was but meane,
this woman had in minde:
Least his fame should be buried cleare,
from those that came behind.
For certainely before nor since,
no man ere understood:
Under the reigne of any Prince,
of one like Robbin Hood.
Full thirteene yeares and something more,
these outlawes lived thus:
Feared of the rich, loved of the poore,
a thing most marvelous.
A thing unpossible to us,
this story seemes to be:
None dares be now so venturous,
but times are chang'd we see.
We that live in these latter dayes,
of civill government;

(If neede be) have a hundred wayes,
such outlawes to prevent.
In those dayes men more barbarous were,
and lived lesse in awe:
Now (God be thanked) people feare,
more to offend the Law.
No roaring Guns were then in use,
they dreampt of no such thing:
Our English men in fight did chuse,
the gallant gray Goose wing,
In which activity these men,
(through practise) were so good,
That in those dayes non equald them,
specially Robbin Hood.
So that it seemes, keeping in Caves,
in Woods and Forrests thicke:
Thei'd beate a multitude with staves,
their Arrowes did so pricke.
And none durst neare unto them come,
unlesse in courtesie:
All such he bravely would send home,
with mirth and Jollity.
Which courtesie won him such love,
as I before have told:
'Twas the chiefe cause that he did prove,
more prosperous than he could,
Let us be thankefull for these times,
Of plenty, truth, and peace:

And

And leave our great and horrid crimes,
least they cause this to cease.
I know there's many fained Tales
of Robbin Hood and's Crew.
But Chronicles which seldome failes,
reports this to be true:
Let none then thinke this a lye,
for if twere put to th' worst:
They may the truth of all discry,
i'th raigne of Richard the first.
If any Reader please to try.
(as I direction show)
The truth of this brave History,
heele finde it true I know.
And I shall thinke my labour well
bestowed to purpose good:
When't shall be sayd that I did tell,
True tales of Robbin Hood.

The Epitaph which the Prioresse of the Monastery of Kirkes Lay in Yorke shire, set over Robbin Hood, which (as is before mentioned) was to bee reade within these hundreth yeares (though in old broken English) much to the same sence and meaning

Decembris Quarto Die 1198. Anno Regni Richardii primi 9.

Robert

Robert Earle of Huntington,
lies under this little ſtone.
No Archer was like him ſo good:
his wil dneſſe named him Robbin Hood.
Full thirteene yeares and ſomething more,
theſe Northerne parts he vexed ſore.
Such out lawes as he and his men,
may England never know agen.

Some other ſuperſtitious words were in it, which I thought fit to leave out.

FINIS.

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